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Subject: Exterior and Interior Divine Providence.

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PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”—PHIL. II: 13.

This may be called a distinct declaration of the doctrine of an interior spiritual providence. Our Lord comforted his disciples with the assurance of an external divine providence. He assured them that their lives, their whole career, their safety, their defense, was a matter of divine oversight and care. He did not tell them how. He never philosophized. He merely stated this grand fact, addressing it, not to their reason as a thing to be understood, but to their heart, to their hope, to their courage, as a thing to be accepted and used for their comfort in life.

This providence was one which took charge of them even in their minutest physical wants. *Take no thought for your food nor for your raiment*, is the command—that is, *take no grinding anxiety*. To take thought, in old English, was to take *anxious* thought,—to be *troubled* about. And the declaration of the Master was this: “Give yourself no undue anxiety about what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, or wherewithal you shall be clothed. God knows that you have need of these things.”

He calls attention to that work of divine providence by which the minutest things—little birds, the flowers of the field, and the grass—are all provided for. In God’s great arrangement, in the organism of nature, there was provision made for the things that are most delicate and helpless. Everything in the vast sphere of divine providence was cared for. “And are you not, he says, “better than birds and flowers? God will take care of you.”

Still he did not say how. He did not teach them botany. He did not instruct them in the physiology of vegetable growth. He said, “You will be taken care of,” but he did not teach the processes by which they should be taken care of.

Further than that, he told them that as reformers, as builders

of society on a better pattern, they would have troubles, and would be brought before the rulers of the synagogue, and would be put to death, many of them; "but let it not trouble you," he says, "be prepared, and I will take you through the emergency."

That was a providence which not merely touched the body, but went within. And later, he gave them a most unequivocal assurance that there was a providence which went through. "I will come and abide with you, and *in* you," he declared. Such was the impression which was made on the apostles that they brought this out in the most bold manner, and declared, as in our text, that God works in men to will and to do; He works in nature simply *to do*;—for nature does not will; but in man he works both *to will* and *to do*. He works in the germination and in the whole conduct of thought and feeling. He works in the relations of thought and feeling to practical life. And he teaches men that he has a providence on the inside which takes care of thinkings and plannings, as divine providence outside takes care of all acts and issues of physical life.

He assures them, then, that in the inward, the silent, the invisible world of the soul, there is a providence which is the equivalent of, and still more glorious than, that providence which takes cognizance of the visible, the tangible and the physical. It is to this last, which is so little regarded, and whose comfort is so little extracted, that we shall call your attention; and it is that part of the divine providence over men and the world which is transcendently the most important.

Consider, for instance, the prodigious fruitfulness of the individual life in any human being—at any rate, in any degree of civilization. Consider what lives we are living daily. Is there anything else so active as burning souls, carrying so many parts, and every part continually producing so many effects, visible or invisible? Consider how many trains of thought are set agoing by the senses from day to day. Consider how much of the action of the mind there is that is conscious and recognized, and how much there is that is unconscious and unrecognized, from the time that we rise in the morning to the time that we lie down and are lost in sleep at night. Who can measure the amount of thought that passes through an ordinarily active mind from first to last? If it were written in a book what voluminous lives we should be found to live, whose thoughts through one single twelve hours would fill a volume! It would not, perhaps, be a volume filled with the most useful matter; but the bulk would be there. The amount, if it were written out and reduced to physical conditions, of the inward

life of one single part of our nature—the thinking and observing part—is beyond computation; and it is not the less important because we have not been accustomed to measure it, estimate it, and conform it to any definite measurement.

Add to this, genius. Add the images which it is all the time forming. Add the effects which it produces on the reasoning and observing powers. Add all the judgments which men are incessantly forming. Add the reasoning processes which they go through, and the observations which they make to arrive at their conclusions.

Add to these the emotions which come up in the mind, of hope and despondency, of courage and despair, of like and dislike, of love and hate. Add the subtle interplay of the ten thousand feelings which are going on all the time. What a vast activity there is stored up in the invisible chamber of every man's life! This is the case even in tranquil moments; but consider how much increased this is by conflicts, by rivalries, by all those things which give rapidity and fruitfulness to the faculties of the mind. What a loom we carry in us! We stand by the side of a Jacquard loom, and wonder how wit could invent a machine that should act so like life. We wonder how any apparatus can be constructed to produce a fabric which shall come out with figures on it of birds, and men, and all manner of figures wrought apparently by the intelligent intent of the machine itself. But, strange as that may seem, it is not to be thought of in comparison with that loom which, without crank or shuttle, is perpetually producing fabrics with every sort of figure in the form of reason, and moral sentiments, and social affections, and passions and appetites. What a vast activity there is going on in the human mind so silently that there is no clanking heard! We go by men every day in each of whom are these fiery, flashing elements of power. Here are companies of them; here is an army of them, here is a city full of them, and there is the vastest activity in the mind of each; and who can conceive what is going on in the multitude of beating, throbbing lives which are flaming forth and reaching out to the uttermost in every direction, all as silent as the dew which is distilled on the myriad flowers in the meadow? Really vast, infinite, is this activity, when you think of it; and yet it goes on in perfect silence.

Consider, too, that large as is the outward achievement of human wit and wisdom, the inward history of it is far larger than the thing itself. In other words, the spiritual element, which works itself out into some physical exponent, is, in the sight of God, without a doubt, and is in our own sight when we think upon it, larger and more transcendent than that physical exponent.

When a man builds a curious house, men look it over, and speak of it as being economic; as being well arranged; as being finished beautifully in this respect or in that; as being admirable in such and such points. We praise it. And we pay the architect in a better coin than the landlord pays him, when, with a heightened conception of him and his work, we say, "We will build, one of these days (for that is the day-dream which every man has, I suppose); and we will have a plan from him." There stands that little home cottage, which we so much admire, and which we mean with some modifications to reproduce; but the house which the architect builds inside is a great deal more curious than the house that he builds outside. All the thoughts that he had; all the processes that he devised; all the plans that he concocted—these are more wondrous a thousand times than that which he finally produced. The invisible building is more than the visible building.

When the artist puts his pencil to the canvass, and brings out a picture which lives a thousand years, men can scarcely find terms in which to express admiration for that picture; but the picture itself is not so wonderful as was that inside painter that first conceived of it; and all the strokes which were put upon it, all the colors and tints which were given to it, are not to be compared with those myriad thoughts of which these are but feeble representations. All those visions out of which he selected; all those thoughts which came down around about him; which he arranged and re-arranged; which he rejected and called back again; which he finally chose among—these, he tells you, infinitely transcend anything that he has succeeded in producing. The painter is more than the painting, a thousand times over.

When a musician has written his tune, when he has written a monody, he has written but a slender stream of that great spring of genius which is welling up in his soul. He will tell you that that tune which sounded in his inward ear was never sung afterwards as it was first sung to him. The silent songs that genius hears, the invisible pictures that genius sees, the hidden buildings which men of genius construct, being castles in the air (literally castles in the air)—these are a thousand times more beautiful than those which get out into the visible world.

We see a household brought up well. A mother who took alone the burden of life when her husband laid it down, without much property, out of her penury, by her planning and industry, night and day, by her willfulness of love, by her fidelity, brings up her children; and life has six men, all of whom are like pillars in the temple of God. And oh! do not read to me of the campaigns

of Cæsar; tell me nothing about Napoleon's wonderful exploits; I tell you that, as God and the angels look down upon the silent history of that woman's administration, and upon those men-building-processes which went on in her heart and mind through a score of years, nothing exterior, no outward development of kingdoms, no empire-building, can compare with what she has done. Nothing can compare in beauty, and wonder, and admirableness, and divinity itself, to the silent work in obscure dwellings of faithful women bringing up their children to honor and virtue and piety. I tell you, the inside is larger than the outside. The loom is more than the fabric. The thinker is more than the thought. The builder is more than the building.

Consider, too, that this silent, invisible life within us is not only all the time working, and immensely fruitful, multitudinous in results, and greater than any or all of its exponents; but that it is all the time, while it is working outwardly, working on itself. It is not so much a life that is working out results independent of itself, as it is a self-building process. All the thoughts that flow from us are working channels of thought in us.

As in the dark caves of Kentucky the lime that is held in solution forms, as the stream trickles from the roof, stalactites, or, as the water drops to the ground, stalagmites, so the process of thought leaves incrustations on the soul within, as well as outside of the soul. It is producing a result. It is perpetually building walls, if you liken it to architecture. It is working channels, if you liken it to a stream. It is adding stroke after stroke to the portrait, if you liken it to art. Nothing moves in this world that it does not exert an influence on the universe in some degree. The flight of a bird, the falling of a leaf to the earth, the scuffling of two birds, or their chasing each other through the air, the vibration of a note, anything which causes the least impact, changes the whole universe, as streams that run to the sea and empty themselves into it change the sea, and change the channel from the top to the bottom. The sea roars and murmurs, and then wipes its brow, and is calm again; but it is never the same sea; it is never the same shore; it is never the same waves. The waves striking the shore, and retreating, never leave it as it was.

Now, if it is so in hard matter, if it is so in visible and physical things, how much more is it so in such mobile and subtle elements as those which constitute the soul's life! How much more is it so with the soul which changes at a glance or a thought, which is more mobile than a thermometer, and which is more sensitive than any barometer! And men are not conscious of it. Nor are they conscious of other changes which we know are going on.

I have lately kept an account of invisible things to a certain extent. I have made myself a companion of things not seen. For my barometer is all the time telling me of the changes of the mystic fluid in which I live. They are registered night and day, and I see what is going on where I cannot see. My barometer is likewise telling me of the increase or decrease of heat which is going on. And my differential thermometer is telling me, all the time, of the moisture that is in the atmosphere. So I know the hydrometric conditions of the world in which I live. And I have come to feel that the things which are going forward on the vastest scale I do not know anything about, or that they do not report themselves to the eye.

Professor Tyndall tells us that what we see of light is not all of light, and that rays which are operative, and which can be demonstrated to exist, have no means of reporting themselves to the eye. There is a vast amount going on which is palpable in this physical globe; but how much more there is that is subtle and impalpable! Light, heat, and electricity are a motive power and formative power which is playing through every single soul that lives, and thinks, and is acting, and is acted upon. The activity of that self which we carry is going forward every day, and changing, modifying, building, unbuilding, piling up, and pulling down the elements of our being. There is a perpetual formative process going on in the silent world about us; but the outward world is not so big as the inside world within us.

Men know about how they stand in some respects. Men know how they stand in regard to their bank account—sometimes. Men know how they stand in regard to their property—some men do. We have certain rough, coarse estimates which we make of ourselves. A man can usually tell about how tall he is; about how much he weighs; about how much he is worth—though he usually makes it twice as much as it really is. A man may be able to tell you that he stands reasonably well with his fellow men, that he is successful in business, and all that. But what coarse measures those are which take cognizance of such things! They do not touch a man's real manhood. What man can tell you to-day what is about the condition of his reason, of his observing power, of his power to philosophize? What man understands the workings of his reasoning intellect? What man has any gauge or mode of estimating, or can give any intelligent conception of, the actual moral state in which he is existing? What man can tell, not simply whether he has lied or sworn, but what is the condition of his moral sensibility? What man can tell what is its fiber, its

power, its growth, its richness or poverty, its admirableness or ignobleness? What man can give any true measurement of himself in these respects?

We are going on, and going up, and building; but we are like men who are building in the night, and do not see what they are building. Did you ever have a thought come to you in the night, and try to write it down without a light, and see in the morning what queer writing you had done? Queerer yet would be the writing which you would do if you were to attempt to write down what you are inside. And yet, the unknown, the unseen facts which are going on in the great invisible world are a thousand times more significant than those which are going on outside.

I look at what summer is doing and has done. What do I see when I go to my little hillside? I perceive that my evergreens are three feet higher than they were last summer, and are proportionally finer and better; but what do I know of all that the little roots have been doing? of the ramifications that they are making? of the supplies which they are gathering from the earth? of the various processes by which they are supporting the life of the shrubs? What do I know in regard to their condition as regards health or unhealth? What do I know of the bark? What do I know of the leaves?

We look at nature with a coarse eye, and see a few gross things; but the silent processes by which sap is furnished to the plant, and by which root, and fiber, and bark, and leaf, and blossom, and fruit are nourished and maintained, we are comparatively ignorant of. We look upon the various parts of a tree, but we look upon them in the most superficial manner, not suspecting that their interior nature is measurable and analyzable.

Who knows what the summer has done to the tree of life inside of us? Who knows where its roots have gone? Who knows what has been the secret history of the elements that have entered into the growth of this tree? Who knows what sap has gone through it and organized new growths in its branches? Who knows the methods by which its fruit is produced? Who can stand before man in imagination and picture the workings of his mind for any given period? We cannot write down the products of human life in a single year, and not even in a single month. How profoundly ignorant we are of ourselves; and yet it is in ourselves that we live, if anywhere. The man inside is the real man. The outside man is the mere shell or crust. That which goes to make manhood is not that which addresses itself to the outward senses: it is love, and truth, and fidelity, and aspiration,

and spirituality; and what do you know about these? What have you by which to trace and measure them? How can you estimate them? Yet you are sailing through the air, you are voyaging across the sea, you are carrying this great invisible realm of yourself upward and onward, to be reported by and by, when death shall come; and yet, how little do you know about it!

Notwithstanding all these sublime forces which exist in a man, how helpless he is to take care of himself! Not a babe of months, left to cook its own food, would be more helpless to supply his wants than the wisest man, left alone, is to fashion his own spiritual aliment, and take care of his inside life.

Thank God, science is now more and more, by analogies, pointing in the same direction, and teaching that all growths in this life are along a line which promises a higher spiritual development.

If, then, we know so little of men, and of things below, how much less do we know of the other life? How much less do we know of things which are indispensable to the shaping of that immortality in which we believe, or seek to believe?

Upon the basis of these representations, the doctrine of a providence exterior and interior is one which every man ought to believe, and which I think every man of a higher reason does believe. I most fully believe in the exterior providence of God, and I more fully and earnestly believe in his interior work. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," says the apostle, "for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do." I want the divine providence, the providence of clouds, and storms, and rains; I want the providence of summer and winter; I want the general providence of God, to make physical industry successful, and to guide me in all my ways. As a business man, as a merchant, as a lawyer, as a physician, I need to act in a sphere of external providence; but living there is comparatively easy. It is not to be compared with living in that other sphere, which is so vast, and which involves such momentous interests. That is where we especially need God's providence. And when God says, "I work in you to will and to do," the heart says: "Blessed be God, that there is a providence in the inside as well as on the outside."

Brethren, I know there are a great many who doubt whether there is a divine providence; yet, I know that if you take it as it is laid down in the New Testament, it is not only easily comprehensible, but employable, and that it is full of bounty and fruit. But if you attempt to frame and fashion the method of it, and cast yourself on science for a solution of it, you come to grief, and are

like a man who should cast himself on a hedge of thorns. Our Master never told us how he managed his providence. What did he say? He simply said: "Confide in me. I am the Guide; I am the Father; and I take care of all men. I take care of the beasts, of the grass of the field, and of the flowers; and certainly I take care of you. Therefore trust in me. Lean back your weary head, and believe that you are not the only one there is that concerns himself with your fate. Believe that there is God the Father, who looks after your welfare." "How, Lord?" "That is my business."

It is our philosophical curiosity or impertinence that runs forward and undertakes to say that God's providence works in this way, or that way, or the other way. It is the attempting to arrive at an explanation of the providence of God that brings us to grief in our reasonings.

"Why, does not God govern by natural law?" say men. "Do you suppose men can change natural laws? Do you suppose men's thoughts and wishes are going to change the organism which from eternity was laid down?" I say, I do not know anything about it. But then, I know that the God who makes natural laws, can use them to do what he wishes to have them do. I do not know how God ordains and administers his providence, but I know he has declared that he has a providence; and I know that I am a thousand times happier in believing it than I should be in disbelieving it. I am a thousand times more active when I am working under the influence of hope than when I am working under the influence of despair. When I put my trust in myself, or in any human power, I fall back discouraged and sick at heart; but when I say to myself, "Fool, why give yourself anxious thought? Does not God think enough for all his creatures? Do not distrust him," I am cheerful, and buoyant, and full of courage. I have seen skepticism on the subject of the providence of God, and I have seen anxiety about the future, in men. I have seen it in women. I have seen it in *this man*. And I have asked myself, after the manner of the sublime sarcasm of Christ: "Which of you, by taking thought, can add a cubit to his stature?" Suppose you are four feet high, and suppose you worry yourself almost to death about it, do you grow by worrying? Does it make any difference? Do fretting and anxiety do you any good? Do they not consume your happiness, use up your strength, and make you less fit for life and its enjoyments?

Do not you know some round, healthy-blooded woman who, while other people are crying, and all the time coming to grief, does not trouble herself, and comes out as well as they do, and has comfort all the time, too?

Do not you find men that are driven from pillar to post, that are racked with anxiety, that cannot sleep nights, and that do not know what they shall do to get along better? And are they not like a water-logged ship? And do they not use up their strength by mere fretting and worrying? And therefore is it not better to trust God and do what you can? Is it not better, after you have acted according to your highest wisdom, to leave the results to Providence? "But," says a man, "I shall be bankrupt." Very well, when you get to bankruptcy you cannot go any further: make up your mind to that and be at ease. "But suppose sickness comes?" Well, what can sickness do? It can kill you—that is all; and if you had just as lief die as live, that ends it. Your book-keeping is too operose. You do not keep your accounts on the right plan. Living or dying you are the Lord's.

I should like to have these men who doubt providence in external things (for I am now speaking to such) overhear their children in the nursery talking in this wise: Here are little Robert and little Mary. The elder is only ten years of age, and the other eight; and below them are brothers and sisters, six, five, four years of age, and so on all the way down. They are talking to themselves as to where *pa* and *ma* are going to get their clothes and food. They cannot see. They do not understand *pa*'s business. And they are fretting and worrying about where they are going to get what they need to eat and drink and wear. And the mother stands and listens, and thinks. "Would not that make a capital story for a Sunday-school paper? The idea of those young children feeling anxious about how they are going to get along! Just as though we were not going to take care of them!"

And yet, does not that mother herself, when sickness comes, and little Robert is lying sick of one disease in one room, and little Mary is lying sick of another disease in another room, play the child, and a babe at that, and do just the same thing that she saw these children doing? And do not we do the same thing? And does not God laugh at us and chide us? "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things," is the consolation which God breathes into our ears; and if you say, "How?" the reply is, "None of your business." If you find out before God tells you, you will do more than others have been able to do. But will you not believe until you do know how?

Suppose you are in danger of bankruptcy, and it is sharp 2:30, and the bank closes at 3:00, and you have got to pay five thousand dollars or fail, and you come to me, and I let you have the money; before taking it, will you ask me, "Where did you get it?" "I

got it, and got it for you, and that is all you want to know about it."

Some men seem more foolish than those Indians or heathens who scarify their bodies and torment themselves. It would seem as though men tried to make their troubles and sorrows that are ministerial worse than they are.

Now, if this is so in regard to the outside providence, which takes care of our physical comforts and material wants, how is it respecting that inside providence which takes care of our thoughts, and feelings, and imaginations, and lays the foundation of immortality in us, building up that something which is by and by to stand before God? We have no chart nor compass on the sea of inward life over which we are voyaging, except God. He is our Hope and Help in this great inner realm through which we are passing, not by the senses, but by faith. And if we live by faith and not by sight, how sweet and comforting it is to hear our Master say to us, "Work out your own salvation, and go forward with hope and courage, for it is God that is working in you to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Listen to those other words which are contained in the Epistle to the Colossians:

"Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth: for ye are dead; and your life is hid."

This great inward life is hid. Where is it hid?

"Your life is hid with Christ in God."

You are living, as it were, in the bosom of the Eternal.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Lift your drooping head, O soul, much desponding, but easily conscious of little that is good and much that is evil! O soul, much tempted, much tried, sorrowful, waiting, sometimes compelled to patience! lift up your head. Your life is more than appears. What is going on in your life you have no registry of, but God has kept an account of it all. He has been molding you by a million touches; by thoughts and feelings he has been building a structure within you; and when he takes away the scaffold, as he will ere long, then you will appear glorious to him, to angels, to men, and to yourself. And then you will be satisfied, first with yourself, when you see that you are wrought in the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Commit yourselves to the providence of God in outward things; commit yourselves to the dear providence of God in inward things; and believe that neither your father, nor your mother, nor the wife of your bosom, nor your own self even, loves you half so much as

the God who made you, the God who keeps you, and the God who manifested his love for you by the gift of his Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who is God in you the hope of glory.

Let us draw near to God, dear Christian brethren, this morning, with renewed confidence and trust. Let us, as we partake of these emblems of the broken body of Christ, and of his blood shed for the remission of our sins, renew our hope, and become, even in these dark days, children of light. Let the promises of God be like so many chaplets round about our head. Let us stand strong, not in our own wisdom, and not in our own goodness, but in this: He loves us; and having loved us, he will love us unto the end.

I now affectionately invite all who need divine help, all who are conscious of their own sinfulness, all who are earnestly and honestly desiring to live a Christian life, and all who are willing to take the bounty which God proffers to them—I now affectionately invite all such to partake with us of these emblems, which are not alone for church folks, nor for eminently Christian people. I present to you your dear Jesus, who, when he walked upon the earth, was a Friend of publicans and sinners. And if there be here, any who, being sinful, long for regeneration, for uplifting and for nobility in God, he is your Jesus, your Saviour; and you have a right to these humble memorials, if you accept them sincerely as a help to a better and a higher life. Whether you belong to one church or another, or to no church, if you covenant to give yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to live, as far as in you lies, by the help of God, a high and holy life, I invite you to tarry with us. I invite sinners to partake of the bounty and blessing of their promised Saviour.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

OUR heavenly Father, we thank thee that thou art, though thou art so much above our reach, and that thou art everywhere. To our homes we come by weary journeyings; but it is home for the soul anywhere throughout the vast domain of God. Where there is want or sorrow or need, thou art close at hand. Though thou dost not now manifest thyself to these our bodily eyes; though men may no longer reach out their hand to thee, yet thou knowest how to make known thy presence and power to our inward life, and our souls greet thee, and take hold upon thee. We rejoice when we have spiritual fruition of our God, that this higher communion is granted to us, and that we are not left to the earth to be earthly by a mere physical communion. We rejoice that we are drawn to a higher life; that we are drawn into the better part of ourselves; that we are growing; and that by faith we come to that manhood which is appointed to those who follow thee.

We rejoice, O Lord, that thy testimonies are sure, and that the witnesses which have now swelled through the ages of the faith of God toward his people are not vain witnesses. We ourselves also testify to thy divine goodness. Ever since we can remember, thy mercies have been round about us. Thou hast done exceeding abundantly more for us than we could ask or think. Thou hast shed the light of thy countenance upon us; and it has been daylight indeed to our souls. Thou hast been with us in the storm and in the calm; in sickness and in health; in perplexity and in times when all things were clear and tranquil. Thou hast been a God for the soul. Thou hast met its wants and exigencies. Thou hast blessed us in the innermost recesses of our life. Thou hast made it profitable for us to call upon thee in prayer. Thou hast granted unto us that communion which has cast its light out in all the times of strife and struggle in the world. We rejoice to believe that thou wilt not leave us nor forsake us; and that having loved thine own, thou wilt love them unto the end.

We thank thee that more and more are finding their way to the unknown God. We thank thee that more and more are coming through their nobler part to that kingdom which is the realm of the spirit, and not of the body. Especially may thy blessing rest upon thy servants who have been gathered to-day into this visible church, and who are joined to the company of those who live by faith. Be with them in all their relations of life. Grant that they may live more and more godly, with their eye upon the world that is to come; that their hopes may be more and more radiant; that their hearts may be stirred within them, both to obey thee in the silence of their thoughts and to work out before thee with their hands the things which are becoming. We pray that thou wilt comfort them in their household relations. Sanctify their afflictions. Bless to them their prosperity. Take from it all its dangers. May they find every single day that their strength is in God. May they walk more happily than ever before. May they be more cheerful, more hopeful, more courageous. May they bear such a testimony by their life that men shall be led to draw near to their Saviour, and find the same bounty and blessing which they enjoy.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon the families of this church. We thank thee for all thy great goodness to it in times gone by; for the unity of feeling which exists in it; for the absence which there has been of division, and hardness, and coldness, one toward another. Thou hast unit-

* Immediately following the reception of members into the church.

ed this church in thee, and so in itself. And we pray that still thou wilt go on in ways of mercy with it.

May thy truth evermore be clear. May it search the innermost thoughts of men. May it lead to nobler lives, and to higher conceptions of character, and to more blessed fruitfulness.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon parents who are attempting to rear their children unto manhood. May they never be weary in well-doing. May they not be discouraged nor give up so long as life shall last.

We pray that thou wilt bless the labors of thy servants who are devoting themselves to the welfare of those who are less favored than themselves. May those who carry light into dark places, those who go to houses of distress bearing comfort, those who carry instruction among the ignorant, and those who endeavor to help such as need help around them—may they be themselves guided and sanctified and abundantly blessed of God.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt put it into the hearts of more not to live for self, not to live for things transient, but to live in the spirit of Him who went about doing good, and who said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. More and more may this spirit be diffused throughout the land.

May churches no longer be divided one over against another. May they learn those things which make for peace and union. May love prevail. May the power of the malign passions be more and more banished from the earth, until at last the beast shall be uprooted, and the man shall emerge and come forth in all the purity and beauty that is in Christ Jesus.

Now, may the services of this sanctuary be acceptable in thy sight. We would please thee. Thy pleasure is our joy.

We pray that thou wilt grant to every one who is present with us a portion of thy blessing. Remember those who are strangers in our midst. Grant that the blessing of God may rest upon them, and that they may find fellowship in thy sanctuary with thee and with us. Remember those dear ones who are far away in their households. Follow their desires and prayers this morning.

Spread the word of truth throughout all the world. May the number of those who labor to carry the Gospel to their fellow men be increased. May those who bear the name of Christ be precious everywhere. May nations no longer bruise and wound each other. May they no longer throw themselves with desolations one upon another. May the time of peace and gladness come when Christ shall reign over all the earth.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore.
Amen.

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